

## **EPI Update for Friday, June 21, 2013**

### **Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)**

### **Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

**Items for this week's EPI Update include:**

- **Health advisory related to synthetic opioids**
- **2012-2013 influenza activity**
- **Infant botulism investigation**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

#### **Health advisory related to synthetic opioids**

A number of intravenous drug users have overdosed on a new non-prescription injected synthetic opioid called acetyl fentanyl. Acetyl fentanyl is up to five times more potent than heroin and has not previously been documented in illicit drug use. CDC recommends increased vigilance by public health agencies, emergency departments, state laboratories, medical examiners, and coroners for patients with symptoms consistent with opioid overdose and laboratory results showing an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) positive for fentanyl.

For more information, visit [emergency.cdc.gov/HAN/han00350.asp](http://emergency.cdc.gov/HAN/han00350.asp).

#### **2012-2013 influenza activity**

The 2012-2013 influenza season in Iowa began earlier, peaked earlier, and was more severe than the 2011-2012 season, which was particularly late and mild. The first case of seasonal influenza was confirmed by the State Hygienic Lab (SHL) in September of 2012. Activity increased in November and peaked in late December, with influenza A (H3N2) predominating. Flu seasons typically increase in late December or early January, and peak most commonly in February.

This season had the highest number of hospitalizations reported through the sentinel surveillance network since reporting began in 2006-2007. Nearly 1,000 influenza-associated hospitalizations were reported from 23 sentinel hospitals; of those hospitalizations, 52 percent were among people older than 64 years of age. By comparison, there were only 119 hospitalizations reported during the mild 2011-2012 flu season.

#### **Infant botulism investigation**

IDPH has received three reports of suspect infant botulism in the last two weeks. One child tested negative, but two have preliminarily tested positive for botulism neurotoxin. The two preliminarily positive cases have different strains of toxin. No classic risk factors (such as honey) were identified for either case, and both were fed different brands of baby formula. All three received BabyBIG® antitoxin.

Botulism is immediately reportable in Iowa. When a case is suspected, IDPH will work to secure antitoxin and facilitate laboratory testing, if necessary. For more information on botulism, visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/cade/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Botulism](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/cade/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Botulism) or [www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/ibttp/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/ibttp/Pages/default.aspx)

**Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

None

**Have a healthy and happy week!**

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